



Ethnogeography: liberating the learner in primary geography.

Dr. Fran Martin, University of Exeter, UK.
IGU Herodot Conference, Institute of Education, London
April 10th - 12th 2007

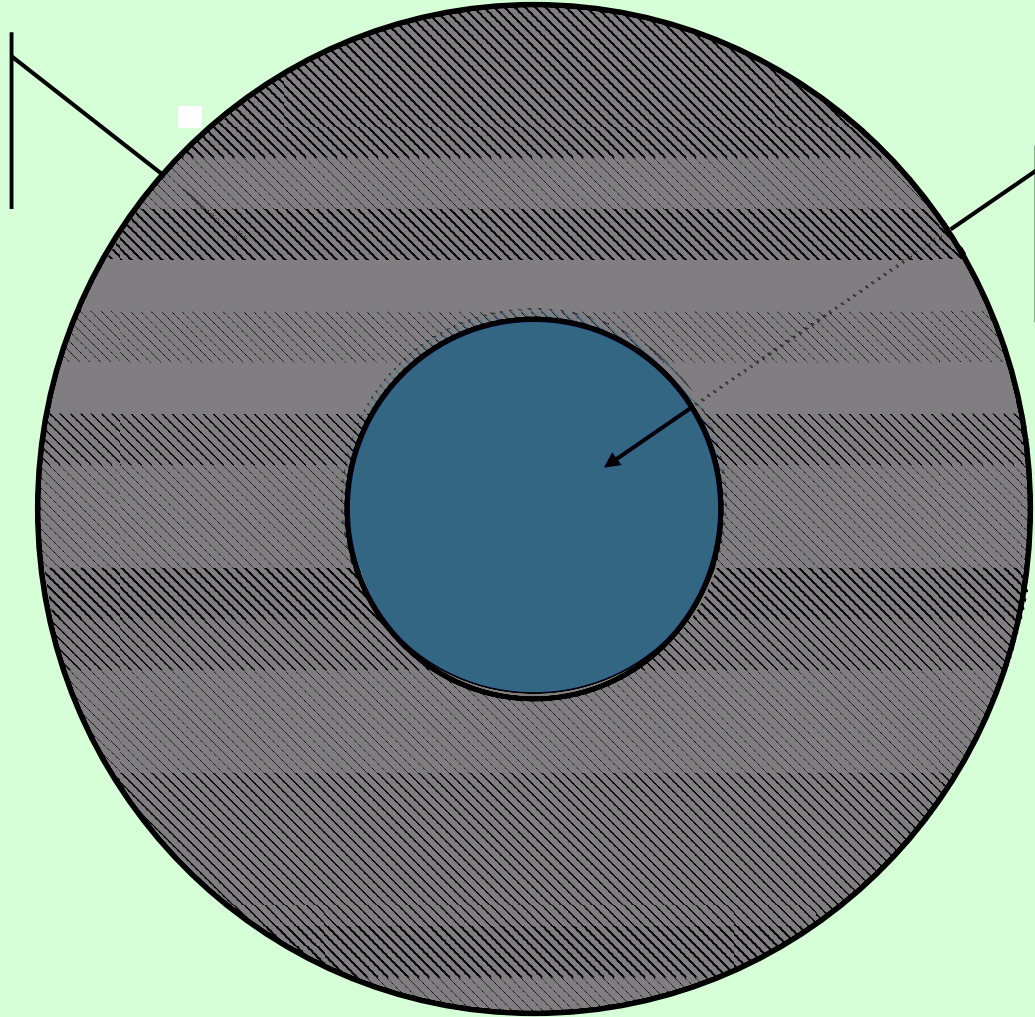
Key Research Questions

- What conceptions about subject and teaching & learning do student teachers hold? (Cognitive component)
- What beliefs about subject and education do student teachers hold? (Affective component)
- How can these conceptions and beliefs be ‘accessed’ – raised to explicit level? (Teaching and research tools)
- What is the relationship between these conceptions and beliefs and a student’s developing practice as a teacher of primary geography?

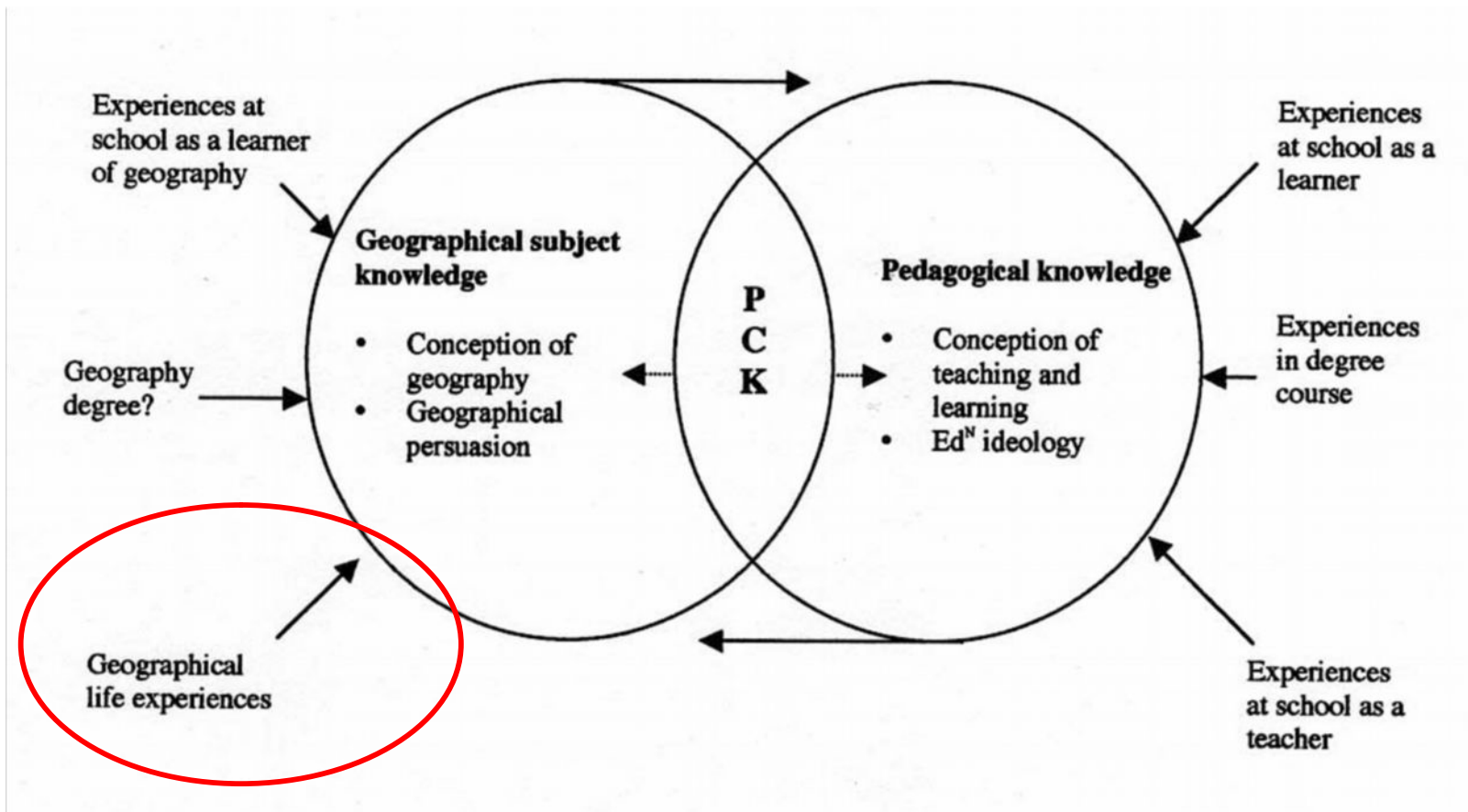
Key findings

- Concept maps and stimulated recall interviews
- Content and concepts, paradigms
- School geography, everyday or living geography

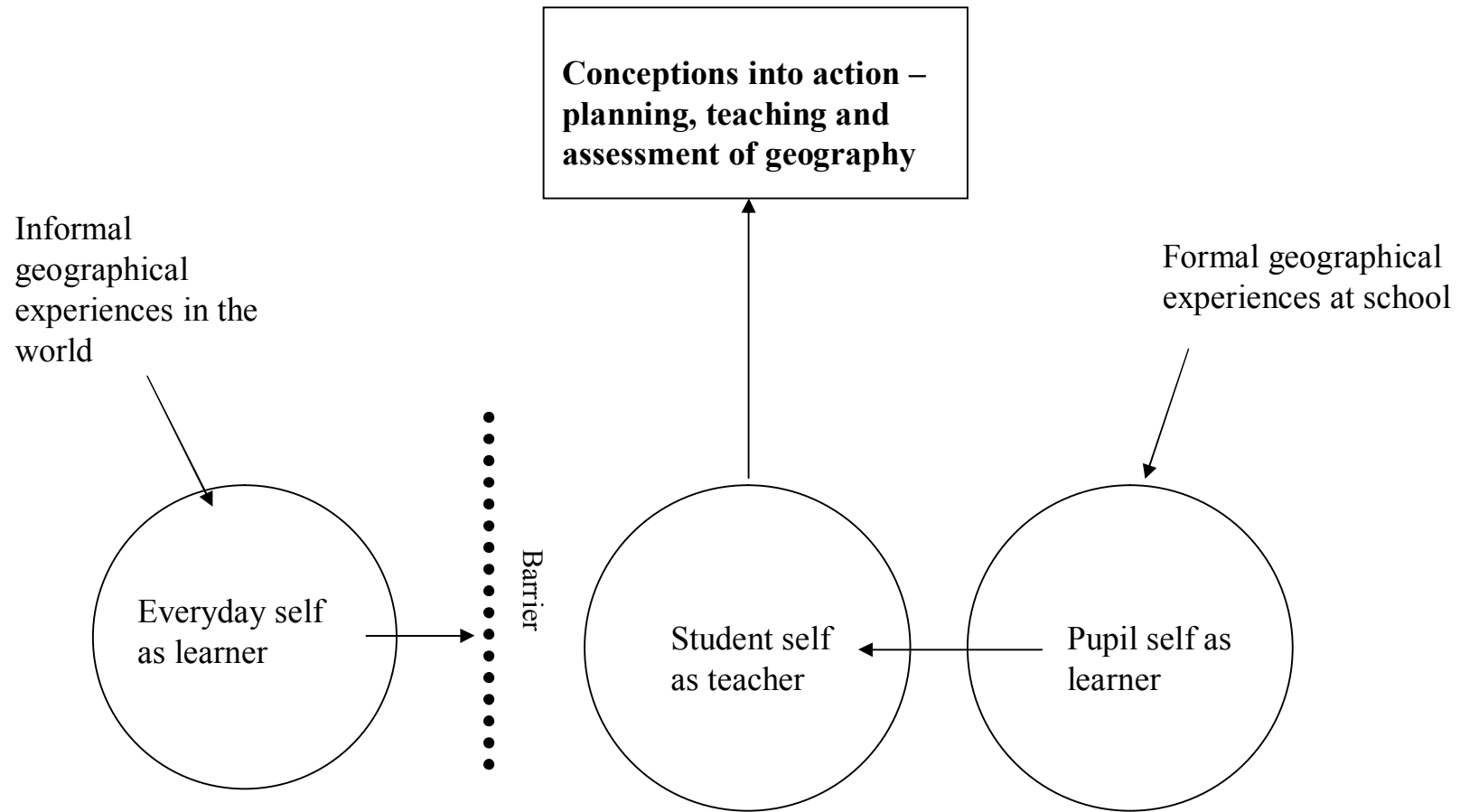
Everyday
geography



School
geography



Model to show the influences on geographical and pedagogical knowledge which in turn influence pedagogical content knowledge.



A diagrammatic representation of the influences on student teachers of primary geography at an early stage in their development

A new paradigm for primary geography?

- That enables learners to recognise the value of their everyday experiences and that they are already thinking geographically in their everyday lives
- That is suited to the context that they are living (and working) in
- Ethnogeography (geography of people, culture)

Ethnomathematics

- D'Ambrosio (1985) - learned (academic) maths stifled the maths that is practiced as part of everyday life; for some pupils schooling disempowered them
- Academic maths - Eurocentric, set out in ways which benefit the academically initiated
- *A key assumption in this field ... is that, through interacting in a myriad of daily-life activities, people already think and, more specifically, they think mathematically* (Frankenstein and Powell, 1994:74)

Freirian concept of education

- The dominant discourse is that of the powerful and does nothing to reflect the lived experiences or culture of the oppressed
 - Pupils (primary schools)
 - Students (ITE)
 - Teachers (National Curriculum)

Linking practical and academic

- Everyday geographies of learners is something of value rather than 'naïve'
- To replace the privileging of one group with that of another would be just a questionable
- Within a liberatory paradigm the voice of the academic or specialist should not be ignored
- How can we enable learners to see the link between everyday experiences and the ways in which geographers make sense of the world?

Dimensions for geographical teacher education

Becoming aware of:

- Geography as a universal activity
- The multilinear development of geography
- Geography and geographical education as socio-cultural processes
- The geographical potential of our learners

Maya's shoes



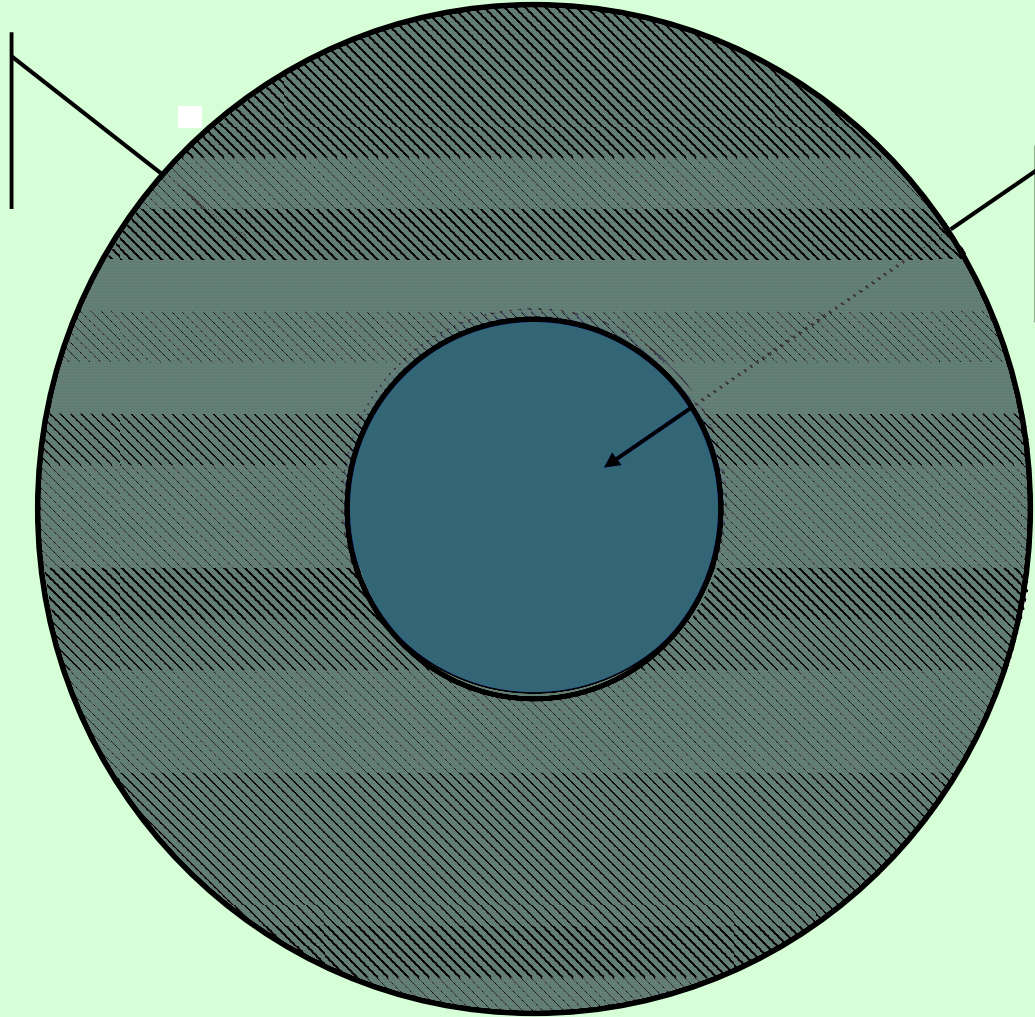
- Students find out how their lives and those of countless ‘usually unseen others’, near and far, are interdependent and interrelated
- Exploring the biographies and geographies of everyday ‘stuff’

Maya's shoes



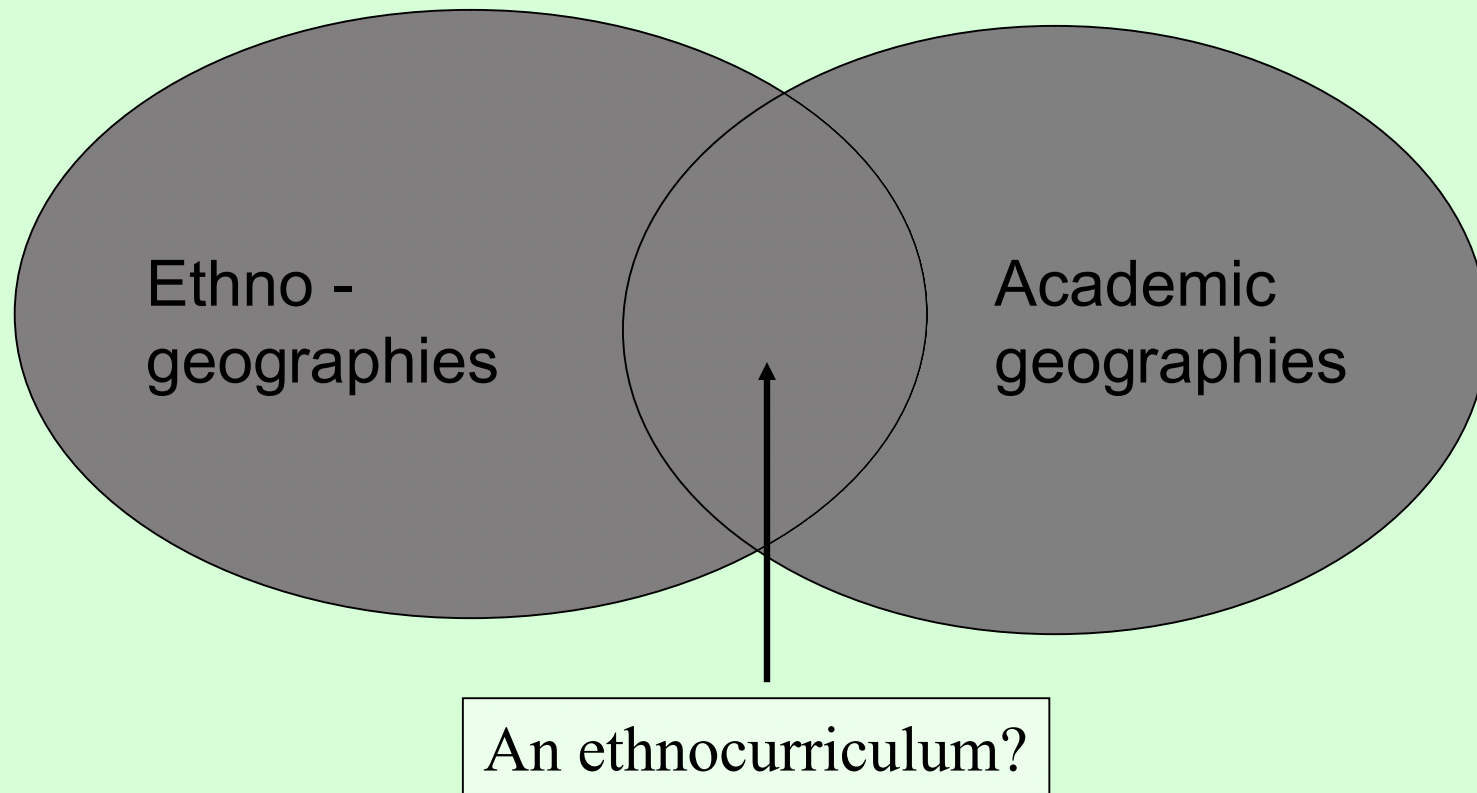
- Made in Moscow, hand-made start to finish
- Leather, satin, cotton, paper, burlap
- Old traditions and modern technology plus 100% ecologically friendly materials

Everyday
geography



School
geography

Ethnogeography and the Primary Curriculum



Ethnogeography and the Primary Curriculum

- Dialogic - discourse of the everyday and the academic
- Liberatory - frees from constraints of either discourse
- Potential to contribute to global citizenship education

Children's Space (Ross, 2004)

- Children's views and experiences of their local area explored through use of photography
- Play spaces, natural and unkempt areas
- Sanitisation and marginalisation leading to appropriation of adult spaces for own use
- Local issues of concern to children that have global dimensions

Ginger's Journey



- *‘Ginger and I would really like to find out more about your school and what you like about it. Could you take us to your favourite places and you can take some photographs?’*

Ginger's Journey



- All pupils chose outdoor places
- Features predominantly play equipment, but also places to sit e.g. benches
- Play features chosen for a variety of reasons - none for play purpose alone
- Social fulfillment equal to play itself in importance
- Connections to other experiences (sandpit and beach holiday) also important

Last words

- *As a newly qualified teacher I now feel I have the confidence to teach primary geography using opportunities relevant to pupils' lives, helping them to make sense of the world in which they live. Mostly, however, I aim to teach geography to my pupils in a way that will motivate and excite them, helping them make the connection between the subject and their everyday lives. (McHale, 2006)*

References

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